

NATIONAL FEDERATION OF STATE
HIGH SCHOOL ASSOCIATIONS



NEWS RELEASE

High School Boys Lacrosse Rules Revisions Focus on Pre-game Management and Risk Minimization

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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INDIANAPOLIS, IN (September 18, 2009) — Beginning next season, boys lacrosse players must wrap their fingers around the handle of the crosse during a faceoff.

This clarification of Rule 4-3-4 was one of nine changes made by the National Federation of State High School Associations (NFHS) Boys Lacrosse Rules Committee at its July 14-15 meeting in Indianapolis. These changes were subsequently approved by the NFHS Board of Directors.

“Fingers may not touch the head of the crosse,” said Kent Summers, NFHS assistant director and liaison to the Boys Lacrosse Rules Committee, “and further, a player must wrap his fingers around the handle.”

In other changes, Rule 2-1-1 now clarifies the penalty and procedure if a team fails to have a properly equipped goalkeeper at the beginning of the contest. The new entry reads: "A team shall begin the game with at least 10 players and must have a legally equipped goalkeeper on the field at all times or it forfeits the game."

"The rule was put in place last year, but the penalty was not clearly stipulated when a team started a game without a properly equipped goalkeeper," Summers said. "It is now more clearly stated."

The rules committee also identified "Failure to have a properly equipped designated goalkeeper" as illegal procedure in Rule 6-5-2t.

In 2010, the NFHS wants to ensure that enforcement of the current check rules is closely followed. A portion of Rule 4-16 was rewritten to state that "Body checking of an opponent in possession of the ball or within five yards of a loose ball or when the ball is in flight within five yards of a player is legal."

Also revised for the 2010 season was Rule 6-3-2f, which now reads: "Hold the crosse of the opponent using any part of the body." This revision

makes "locking down with his arm or any other part of the body" over a defender's stick illegal.

Four of the nine rules revisions are major editorial changes. Rule 4-3-1 was changed in order to establish possession of the ball if a period ends with one of the teams being a man down due to a penalty. The rule gives possession to the team that would have been awarded possession after the penalty or entitled to possession by a play-on. If neither team has a man advantage, the next period will begin with a faceoff.

Another major editorial change was approved in Rule 4-6-3a, which now states: "In the case of a loose ball declared out of bounds, the location of the restart is determined by the point where the ball broke the plane of the boundary line."

Rule 4-9-2k was changed to clarify procedure in Rule 5-4 Situations D and E. The rule clarified the situation if a player adjusts the strings or crosse in any way before an official has inspected the stick, and how this situation would be handled.

Finally, the rules committee added a new sentence to the first paragraph of Rule 7-3: "If the ball has crossed the end line prior to the penalty occurring, the ball shall be restarted at that spot." This makes any simultaneous foul (either live ball or dead ball) have the same restart location and clarifies last year's original change to this rule.

In addition to the nine rules revisions, the committee also established five Points of Emphasis for the upcoming season: 1) pregame management and risk minimization; 2) enforcement of current body check rules; 3) reminding players and coaches that, although the NCAA has revised stick specifications beginning with the 2010 season, the NFHS stick dimensions have not changed; 4) stalling; and 5) crosse construction.

Boys lacrosse had 88,596 participants in 1,984 schools during the 2008-09 season, according to the High School Athletics Participation Survey conducted by the NFHS.

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